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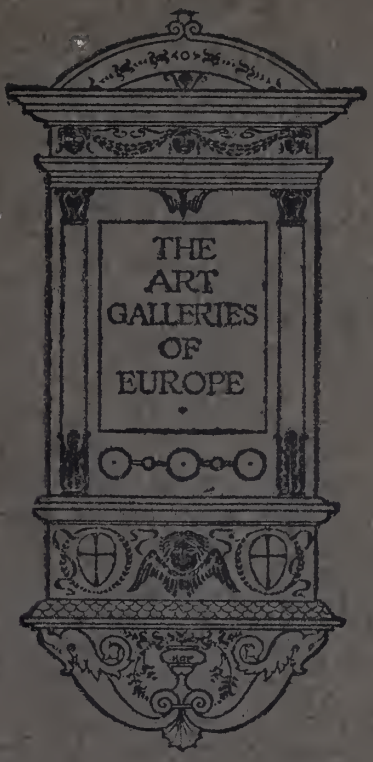

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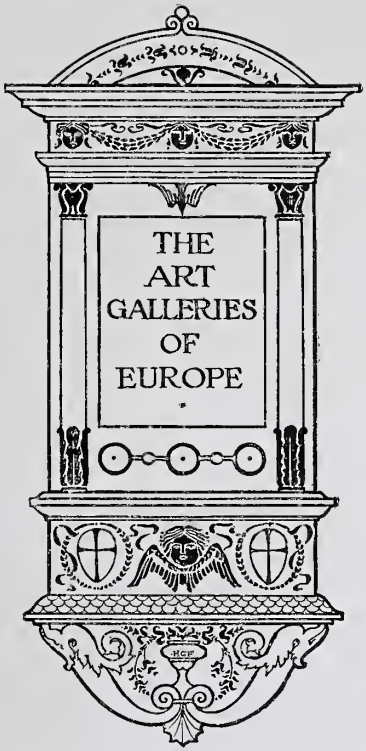

THE NATIONAL GALLERY
LONDON
THE LATER BRITISH SCHOOL

TATE GALLERY

KING COPHETUA AND
THE BEGGAR MAID
FROM THE PAINTING BY SIR EDWARD BURNE JONES

THE NATIONAL GALLERY · LONDON

THE LATER BRITISH SCHOOL

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THE NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON

LATER BRITISH SCHOOL

BY ROBERT DE LA SIZERANNE

THE soul of the British people resembles the lake of Derwentwater: at long intervals something dawns into view, something that we may have supposed to have vanished altogether, but that was merely forgotten, and lay wrapt in a profound obscurity which the eye of the tourist does not attempt to fathom. This flowery isle, this floating isle, this strange isle which suddenly returns to the surface, reappearing with all its abundant vegetation and thrusting life, is Mysticism. We see a proof of this in the Tate Gallery, and this is what, at the very outset, distinguishes it from the gallery in Trafalgar Square. There we could admire portraits of sanguine and joyous men, radiant with health, and delighting in an open-air life, in sport, in battle; women in huge dashing hats, with cheeks rosy from the wind, and large wide open eyes gazing without fear and without dissimulation upon mankind and upon the future: human beings that have confidence in life. We saw historic scenes that always exalted the quiet energy of the Anglo-Saxon race; and many admirable landscapes exhibiting the fertility of the soil of Old England and the charm of her rural life, or her empire, ever-increasing, the *sempre si fa il mare maggiore* of Turner—the empire of the seas: all this painted with a touch free, easy, rapid, *alla prima*, like work accomplished in play and amid rejoicing, like another kind of recreation or sport.

Here at the Tate Gallery we find all changed: pensive contemplative beings, anxious and recoiling—for the first time, perhaps—before the mystery of fate; their eyes dilated, not by the excitement of sport or pleasure, but by ecstasy before some invisible beauty, or terror at

an unknown danger; landscapes vaster and more "atmospheric," but less definite in their lines, seeming like "projections" of their souls upon the field of Nature. In short, we have *symbols*, terrible or mysterious—incarnations of great human mysteries: Death, Love, Sorrow, the flight of Time. And at the same time the painting is careful and laborious, revealing effort at every touch; the execution is dry, concise, *tight*—as though the mystery of the subject, weighing upon the heart, had also stiffened the painter's hand and restricted the freedom of his brush. The word "awe" recurs to the mind at every turn, while it never suggested itself at the National Gallery, except before the pictures of William Blake or John Martin. No doubt in Art, as in biology, there is no sharp dividing line between species, organs, or periods. We may sometimes note the appearance of ante-types of species, perhaps not to be evolved until a century later, just as, long after a step in advance has been taken, we see cases of "reversion to type." Thus in British art of an older day there were some few precursors of modern mysticism and symbolism; but if we take British painting as a whole we find it includes two very distinct schools, and that Mysticism is the new feature which marks out the modern school, clearly differentiating it from the art of the eighteenth century which we have been admiring.

However, mysticism or symbolism did not appear all at once among the masters belonging entirely to the nineteenth century. In examining the work of the modern British school we must distinguish two periods that are very different both in inspiration and also in the colour and execution of the pictures. We must consider separately the Modern School before Pre-Raphaelitism and the Modern School after Pre-Raphaelitism.

The Modern School "before Pre-Raphaelitism"—that is to say, before 1848–1851—comprises the works of masters such as Wilkie, Mulready, Stanfield, Leslie, Herring, Roberts, Webster, Bonington, Landseer, Maclise, Müller, Ward, Copley Fielding, Gilbert, and Linnell, reproductions of whose work are here given. Some of these pictures were painted, it is true, after 1851—some of Landseer's, Gilbert's, and Linnell's, for instance—but these were only a continuation of the previous work of those masters, whose style was completely formed before the Pre-Raphaelite revolution.

The Modern School "after Pre-Raphaelitism" comprises all the other modern work. First of all, that of the first three P.R.B.s, Rossetti, Hunt, and Millais, and of their master, Madox Brown; then that of one who was a kind of contemporary Pre-Raphaelite, though independent of the Brotherhood: G. F. Watts; next that of what we may term the second generation of Pre-Raphaelites: Burne-Jones, Strudwick, &c. It further comprises artists who were not Pre-Raphaelites, but who bore the moral stamp of Pre-Raphaelitism, or who profited by its discoveries in the matter of colour, *bright colour:*

Frederick Walker, John Brett, Leader, Lawson, La Thangue, Moore, North, Orchardson, Herkomer, Stevens, Frank Holl, Clausen, Mason, and Corbet; and finally certain masters who seem to have learnt nothing from Pre-Raphaelitism, such as Leighton or Alma Tadema. An artist who died shortly after the success of the P.R.B.s, but who seems in his latter years to have attempted what they were beginning to achieve in their youth, serves as a connecting-link between the two periods: this is Thomas Seddon.

The illustrations to this volume enable us to observe that between the first group, of works done before 1851, and the second, of works done after 1851, there are radical differences of subject, composition, inspiration, and even of gesture and drawing. And when we see the original paintings we perceive these differences even more clearly; for if they happen not to be noticeable in composition and drawing, they will certainly be so in colour and execution. Even the casual visitor who is least informed in matters of Art will divine, if he has eyes, that something like a reconstitution of human vision must have taken place between these two periods. And he will be right: this something is Pre-Raphaelitism.

Let us see what British painting was before Pre-Raphaelitism, after Wilkie, and up to the time of Ward. It may be said to have been for the moment under the influence of the Dutch School; indeed, that was perhaps the moment in its whole history when British art approached most nearly to the art of the Continent, and this is what made the Pre-Raphaelite revolution so necessary. Whether one likes or does not like the painting of Madox Brown, of Hunt, of Rossetti, of Millais, it is certainly evident that it violently detached the British school from falling into line with the Continent. We may look on it as we do on those revolutionary movements of the *Risorgimento*, which, though in themselves unpleasant, had yet the great merit of withdrawing their country from foreign influence and building up a new Italy. Of course I do not mean to say that the art of Wilkie, Leslie, Landseer, Roberts, was not *national* art; but it tended to lose itself in admiration and imitation of the Dutch masters: there were the same subjects, the same lighting, and a tendency to the same colour and the same execution. "A good picture," said Sir George Beaumont, "like a good fiddle, should be brown." So everybody tried to obtain "subdued colour" like what they saw in those old canvases, yellow and faded with time. Looking at the "Blind Fiddler," "Blind Man's Buff," "The Last in," "The Dame's School," "The South Sea Bubble," we see at once that Teniers, Van Ostade, and Steen were studied by Wilkie, by Mulready, by Webster, and by Ward; "Sancho Panza in the Apartment of the Duchess" shows us that Leslie had not forgotten the work of Metzu, Mieris, and Pieter de Hooch; while the "Interior of Cathedral at Burgos" suggests that Rembrandt, or at least the memory of Rembrandt, accompanied David Roberts to Spain.

However, if we look at all these pictures more closely we shall find in them, as in those of Landseer and Maclise, something which these lesser British masters did not take from the lesser Dutch masters, something that is all their own and is a characteristic of their national art: intensity of expression. Van Ostade's or Metzu's figures, writing a letter, awaiting an order, or playing on the clavecin, are entirely devoid of any particular expression; they seem to be doing nothing but wearing their clothes and exhibiting their hands. Pieter de Hooch's figures, placed in a garden or in a kitchen, scarcely put more humanity into the scene than would a fountain or a clock. On the other hand, every figure by Wilkie, Ward, or Leslie plays a dramatic part with a force, an attentiveness, an intensity, which reveal the possession of a soul with desires, enthusiasms, spites, and anxieties infinitely diversified, from the menacing gesture of "John Knox preaching before the Lords of the Congregation" to that of the peasant cracking his fingers to the music of the "Blind Fiddler" in order to amuse the baby. We find here what we hardly ever get from the Dutch masters—*psychological* painting.

Nor is this all. There is also a care for harmonious composition and the balancing of groups not manifested to the same degree by the Dutchmen, who rarely put more than three or four personages into their pictures. When they tried to manœuvre large crowds they got lost, just like a corporal, used to managing his platoon, who is suddenly told off to command a company. The British painters of 1800–1850 know how to manage a crowd. Look at Ward's "South Sea Bubble, a Scene in Change Alley in 1720." Certainly we find "British composition" here—that is to say, a whole composed of easily separable parts, each of which is complete in itself. We may cut the canvas in two places: first on the right, by a perpendicular line starting at the foot of the table and continuing by the top of the back of the chair as far as the end of the vaulted passage of the house in the background; and secondly on the left, following the farthest corner-line of the jeweller's house, where the sign is hanging. Three groups may thus be descried: the first is that made by the table; the second is formed by the person reading a newspaper and the people surrounding him—including the dog which is turning towards him; the third consists of the jeweller's shop, whither the fine ladies have come to sell their trinkets for money with which to speculate. No material link connects these three pictures, yet they form a unique whole, because they do not each of them afford the eye a means of escape into distance, where it may lose its way; there is only one luminous *hole*, and it is placed just where it should be—that is to say, somewhat off the middle—and the different parts of the picture lead up to it. When we descend to detail we may perceive the address with which the dividing perpendicular lines are cut: here by the little child who is speaking to the lady with the fan, there by the dog which is turning its head round. The

child in the "South Sea Bubble" plays exactly the same part as does the greyhound in "James II. in his Palace of Whitehall, receiving the news of the Landing of the Prince of Orange in 1688," by this same Ward. The greyhound is turning its head, apparently because it scents the spy behind the screen; but in reality, firstly, in order to cut the perpendicular line of this screen, and secondly, in order to bring together the group on the left—the gallery and the guards—and the central group of James II. himself, who without the dog would be absolutely separated from the rest.

This dispersed style of composition is even more striking in the case of the other masters. In Webster's "Dame's School" there are at least two very distinct groups, it being possible to divide the picture exactly down the middle. There is no material bond between the two parts, unless it is provided by the barely visible group of children seated in the background. But here at least we cannot say that each group is sufficient to itself. That on the left—the school-mistress—is entirely complete; it is exactly balanced, and, if cut off just after the child who is crying, no one would suspect that there had ever been a second half to the picture. But the group on the right could not be understood separately; its equilibrium needs a counterpoise on the left. In the "Play-Scene in Hamlet," by Maclise, all the defects of "British composition" are apparent, and are not redeemed by the general harmony. On the other hand, in Leslie's "Sancho Panza" the different parts are correlated by such a clever arrangement that it looks like the unpremeditated art of a Kodak snap-shot. Observe the persistent fancy of the British artist for the perpendicular line separating the different parts of the picture (in this case the pilaster), and the adroitness with which, having cut his picture in two parts by means of this pilaster, Leslie brings it together again into a single whole by means of his Sancho Panza's bald head!

In "Blind Man's Buff," one of Wilkie's masterpieces, we see the triumph of this composition in the dispersed style. There are here two pictures, which may be separated by the line of the chimney-piece, behind the Blind Man's right hand. Yet the interest is, as a whole, directed to the *right* by the looks and gestures of the persons on the *left;* and, as a whole, directed to the *left* by the looks and gestures of the persons on the *right*—which results in centralising it strongly upon the principal figure. We have here an example of a very curious phenomenon, one that is very frequent in modern art: an unconscious return to the classical laws of composition. Classical composition took the conventional *pyramidal* form as regards general lines and from the point of view of psychological interest; in the disposition of the figures, the hands, the touches of colour, and the high lights, it adopted the *diagonal* arrangement. When the modern schools came into being they decided that these ancient classical laws were absurd, that they corresponded to no real fact, and that no one should pay any more attention

to them, but should reproduce scenes just as they presented themselves in life—nothing more! Well and good: essays of the kind were made in every sphere of art, and some with success. Now examine these successes closely, and you will see that they revert precisely to the ancient classical laws of composition; only these laws are applied with a very profound understanding of their spirit, not with superstitious reverence for the mere letter, and are combined in such a way as to present a new and unforeseen aspect. Nothing could be more unrestrained, apparently, than this bustle and romp of "Blind Man's Buff"; and of course it is possible that Wilkie thus vividly pictured it to himself at its first conception, or even that chance so presented it in life. But whether he actually saw it so, or conceived it thus at the very outset, or laboriously contrived it, this scene exhibits all the classical laws of composition brought together and combined. First of all, the line of interest is a strict diagonal. If you draw a straight line, starting from the eyes of the man standing on the bench close up against the wall, and continue it diagonally past the face of the child that has hurt its foot, to the other end of the picture, you will find that this line passes directly through the principal figure of the Blind Man and through another of the chief figures—the woman who is shrinking back and gathering up her apron. This is the line of interest, for it mathematically connects the four most expressive faces. Now observe of what this amusing human medley consists, and you will find that it is composed of three exact pyramids: the first, on the left, is formed by a line which starts from the overturned chair, follows the backs of the little boy and the man in the hat who is running, and descends again by the woman in the apron and the kneeling man in the foreground; the outline of the second pyramid rises along the back of this kneeling man, his head, and the right arm of the Blind Man, culminates in the figure pressing against the chimney-piece, and then descends again by way of the faces grouped together like a bunch of grapes, the head of the woman seated on the floor, and the back of the little boy who has thrown his arms round her; finally the third pyramid, conjoined with the second, follows the line of the back of the man who kneels under the left hand of the Blind Man, rising as far as the left hand of the man standing on the bench, and descending again to the figure of the little girl on her knees in the right-hand corner. Nothing of all this appears geometrical, stiff, or arbitrary; it is all free, easy, natural, unpremeditated and mobile as life itself. But, also like life, it is all obedient to laws which are none the less imperative for being hidden and mysterious.

Another characteristic of this period, 1800–1850, in addition to intensity of expression and suppleness of composition, is sincerity when dealing with Nature in landscape. While in France artists were still dallying over "composed" landscape, beautiful "foliage," and the "tree from memory," demanded by the Academy, all the landscape-

painters of Britain were following the road opened up to them by Turner and Constable. Thus Bonington, the friend of Delacroix, who, though his style was formed in France, was himself entirely British by temperament, painted his "Column of St. Mark, Venice," in 1826, with the Salute in the background and the Royal Palace on the right, just as he saw them, without the least thought of a *parti-pris*. Copley Fielding in 1834 took up his position before the dip of a valley "In Sussex," and painted it in all sincerity and admiration, arranging nothing, and confining himself to an attempt at making the slope of the road running away into the distance actually *felt*, as well as the various swellings and undulations of the plain, which holds a wood in its lap as a bowl might contain fruit. Müller himself, though sometimes too much inspired by Claude or the Dutch painters, is a pure naturalist in his "Dredging on the Medway"; and Linnell, when he painted his "Wood-cutters" in Windsor Forest, before 1847, gave us the type of modern landscape: a corner of Nature suddenly discovered, and reproduced just as it was first perceived, with the very simple but very moving theme of the old tree-trunks brought low and their branches lopped off—those ancient witnesses to the years' seasons, so many of which went to the perfecting of their strength, while a single hour has sufficed for their destruction. "Noonday Rest" and "Contemplation," which belong to a much more recent period of the painter's life, are not more happily felt nor more freshly expressed.

Another characteristic of British art of this period, and one that must never be forgotten in its honour, is a feeling for animals and success in giving expression to it. "Who knows whether the souls of the beasts go downwards?" says a certain holy book. To this question Landseer, John Herring, and many others responded by the most subtle analysis of animal physiognomy. Landseer indeed proves himself the compatriot of John Lubbock, Lyall, and Darwin, by his constant and penetrating observation of the smallest actions of animals; and this again distinguishes his art from Dutch art, with which the English school of that time is so often compared. What a difference there is between the white horse of Wouvermans, a simple blotch of light colour in the picture, and the sensible intelligent creatures of "The Old Covert Hack," or "War"! What a distance there is between the curs of the little Flemish pictures, merely concerned about their quarrels over bones, and the personages in "Dignity and Impudence," or "Spaniels of King Charles's Breed" (in the National Gallery)! And how well we can all understand and excuse the famous speech of the King of Portugal to Landseer, when the latter was presented to him: "Oh, I have so wished to make your acquaintance; I am so fond of beasts!"

Let us consider well, however, to what is due the very special impression that Landseer's animals make upon us, and we shall see that it is not merely because of his exact observation of their move-

ments. In France Géricault, Meissonnier, Rosa Bonheur, Fromentin, Barye, Gardet, Steinlen, and Lambert have analysed the characters of horses, oxen, lions, dogs, and cats with perhaps as much subtlety and correctness as did Landseer. None of them give us the impression that Landseer produces. He gives us in addition a quality which we have noted as a characteristic of the British School—a characteristic not merely in its pictures of myths, of heroes, or of fine ladies and gentlemen, but one just as much to be noted in the painting of curs, mastiffs, and horses—that is, intensity of expression. His animals are ardent, impassioned, filled with an inner life, which is expressed by their eyes and the pose of their heads: passionately faithful, like "The Old Shepherd's Chief Mourner" or the horse in "War"; passionately attentive, like the dogs in "Highland Music"; full of inward dignity or pugnacious irascibility, like the dogs in "Dignity and Impudence" or "Alexander and Diogenes." He is the Shakespeare of the animals.

Thus modern British art which flourished before the Pre-Raphaelites —that art which is typically represented by Scotch Wilkie, Irish Mulready, and the purely English Leslie—had indeed qualities *sui generis*, from a psychological point of view. It cannot be confounded with the art of the Dutch masters. But from the purely pictorial point of view, from the technical point of view, it was losing by little and little every trace of originality. The best of these masters, Wilkie, sought for no colour other than that of Teniers, and in his admiration for the amber tone of the "jelly-like vehicle" he went so far as to cry: "Megilp is a colour!" Every picture of this period may be recognised by its glabrous colour plastered upon bitumen (which has destroyed numbers of pictures), false without vigour, elaborate without refinement, too black in the shadows, too brilliant in the lights, but laid on with a deplorable facility. The manual dexterity and rapid workmanship of these painters were a cause of certain decadence. Landseer painted a wild beast in three hours; Copley Fielding dashed in the same everlasting sea-scape with a few strokes of his brush; Maclise could work from memory without the living model; Stanfield, accustomed to scene-painting from his youth upward, imported into all his work the rapid and unfinished execution which he had got into the habit of using; Roberts employed the same colours in his landscapes, no matter what country they represented; Leslie turned out his Sancho Panzas in the apartment of the Duchess as if they were so many pies; and Webster also was extremely expeditious. They painted all their pictures almost in the same manner: on white canvas, putting in the shadows first, then the pure colours, and going over the whole with glazes. Of course, in order to render their shadows transparent they had to use bitumen or some other equally pernicious medium; and their whole aim was to obtain warm tones, brown tones, with occasional transparencies. Nature, with her brilliant lights, her shadows full of colour, her polychromatic vibrations, was utterly ignored.

It was then that the Pre-Raphaelites appeared. From 1848 to 1851 Madox Brown, Rossetti, Hunt, and Millais first astounded and incensed, then attracted, and finally conquered the public interested in art. No doubt they sought an ideal to which they did not always attain; on the other hand, many intentions were imputed to them which were not theirs. It is none the less true that work accomplished after their advent differs entirely from that done before it. They fix a date in British painting, just as did Hogarth or Turner. We can see in every British picture since their day one at least of these three characteristics: a suggestive subject, brilliant colouring, conscientious execution; more often we find all three united. The subject suggestive of profound thought or of subtle feeling has replaced the anecdotal or simply picturesque subject. "Bright colour" has replaced "subdued colour" and the brown "of a Cremona violin." Execution has become emphatic, concise, dry—"*l'École sèche*," as Delacroix called it—instead of depending on bitumen, megilp, or sometimes on the *smear*. Poetry, brilliance, and dryness: these are the three signs by which we may tell that the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood has passed that way.

It is precisely from this collection of works by the great British painters of our own day that the Tate Gallery derives its exceptional character. Except Holman Hunt, the painter of the "Scapegoat" and the "Shadow of Death," they are all represented here; and, except Alma Tadema, they are all represented by some of their principal works. It is true that the portrait-painters are not represented by portraits: Herkomer and Frank Holl, who are portrait-painters chiefly, Millais and Orchardson, who have been so on many occasions, figure in this gallery as dramatic painters only. Besides this, several artists who are British in name only, or by adoption, such as Sargent and Legros, might belie the entirely British character of the gallery to a certain extent, if we stayed too long looking at them. Finally, by a singular stroke of chance, the works of two Presidents of the Royal Academy, Leighton and Poynter, are perhaps the least peculiarly British of all the works preserved here. But still the *ensemble* is quite sufficiently significant.

We find here, in short, the source of most of the new currents that have reinvigorated European art during the latter half of the nineteenth century: Symbolism, Realism, and Impressionism. And at the same time we recognise worthy successors of Turner, of Constable, and of Bonington, in men like Mason, Leader, Lawson, Brett, and North, who have not contributed any new impulses to art, but yet have honourably represented contemporary landscape-painting in Britain.

Let us take symbolism first. Watts has infused new blood into the ancient myths and has made them live again, live so effectually that any one who has seen his figures of Hope, Love, Death, Life, Psyche, and Love Triumphant, can never forget them. They have entered into the mental life of his contemporaries. Of how many works of art can this be said? Watts is a visionary: he sees what others

do not see ; but when once he has given expression to what he has seen this expression is so effective that none can forbear seeing it. His strange figures pursue us wherever we go. Whenever an event occurs to make us feel the might of Death, stronger than Love, or its beneficent power to soothe and lull human suffering ; whenever we are struck afresh by the inexhaustible endurance of Hope living on in the heart of the most unfortunate ; whenever the chronicle of the times provides us with a new instance of the brute-force of Money, crushing the dreams of youth and love ; whenever History reports a hero's glorious death in action, and in the full vigour of his years : henceforward we must see rising before us the figures of " Love and Death," " The Court of Death," " Hope," " Mammon," or " The Happy Warrior." Let us shut our eyes and we see them still ! And they appear to us clothed in a magnificent form : the drawing splendid, the colour dazzling,—athletes moving amid the flames. The execution is strenuous, rugged, striated, scarred, and ridged, but the effect of the whole recalls at once Michelangelo, Titian, Tintoret, and Giorgione — and these are fine memories. One word may suffice in summing up Watts : he has *rehabilitated* the ancient myths, which during the days of " classical " art had fallen to the rank of merely decorative subjects for clocks or screens. His Love is virile, and his Death is beneficent. The former sustains Life and the latter heals her wounds. And when he brings them face to face, as in his admirable and immortal " Love and Death," they are no fancy ornamental figures, two personages of the opera ballet, that stand before the doorway barred with roses ; neither are they two blind forces of Nature : they are indeed the two Powers to whom man owes all that adds value to life, and all that gives it dignity.

Watts's figures strike us chiefly by their incomparable grandeur. When we look at the " Creation of Eve " or " Love Triumphant " we seem to see a human figure which rises into the air, with a single impulse, like a geyser, as though it would touch the sky. This effect is due to the special pains which the artist takes to cut the vertical sweep of his figure by horizontal lines. Flowers, draperies, float about it like clouds ; and in the same way that the clouds clinging to the sides of a mountain often make its summit appear higher, these horizontal lines which divide his figure into separate portions give it greater apparent size.

Symbolic art is also represented at the Tate Gallery by Rossetti, whose " Beata Beatrix " made so deep an impression upon the imagination of all his contemporaries. Inferior to Watts as a draughtsman and as a painter, Rossetti is almost his equal in suggestive power, and this is one of the most suggestive of his pictures : Beatrice, seated at a window of her father's palace in Florence, is suddenly seized with the ecstatic trance of death, and perceives the new world for which she is destined. The sundial which marks the fatal hour ; the oblique rays of light which traversing her hair constitute a sort of natural halo ;

the red Dove, sister to that of the Annunciation, bringing her a white poppy, the mystic flower of love and chastity; Dante in the background with Love, who bears a heart in flames and beckons to the former to follow him: all this, with the Arno and the bridges and old palaces of Florence, barely visible in the lighted distance, is at once a mystery and a revelation. Nothing here is definite; a multitude of things suggest themselves. It is not a large canvas (2 ft. 9 in. by 2 ft. $1\frac{3}{4}$ in. in width), and contains but one important figure. This figure is doing nothing. We have not here the chattering information of Hogarth, of Wilkie, or of Mulready. But we pause far longer before this single figure who is doing nothing, than before a whole crowd of Hogarth's, because she opens for us the gate of dreams—of a dream that has no end.

Here are two more dreamers, in Burne-Jones's "King Cophetua and the Beggar-Maid." Of what are they dreaming? Why is this Mantegna-knight seated at the feet of this Botticelli-shepherdess? Why does he hold his crown thus, as though it were a heavy piece of jeweller's work with which he is much embarrassed? Why has he set aside his buckler and his lance, which stands motionless as a cypress-tree? and at what is she gazing so fixedly, afar off in space, this poor girl whose bare feet are reflected in the precious metal of the throne? Are these two living through one of those delicious moments when man feels himself stronger than fate, stronger than prejudice, stronger than vanity, lifted above himself? Do they see the future unrolling itself before them like a level shady road, bordered with flowers and quiet tombs, such as we see in the pictures of the early masters? Does this little wild bird, on a throne that looks like a jewelled cage, already regret her free wandering life? and is not the passing hour, being the hour of promise, more lovely than all the hours to come? However this may be, this simple innocent love-story touches us more than the most complex intellectual problem. Before it we lay aside our scepticism for a moment, as does King Cophetua his buckler; our critical spirit, as he his lance; and even that crown of Science and Progress, of which we of the twentieth century are so proud, but which does not give us happiness. We lay them at the feet of the Legend, in which we do not believe but in which we should like to believe—the humble legend which gives us rest from all those useless sciences, as from all the sad realities of life.

Millais is no mystic like Rossetti, no symbolist like Watts; still he too is a suggestive painter. For every one of his pictures suggests to the mind more than it shows to the eye. Such, for instance, is the "Vale of Rest," wherein all memories of past life and all hopes in a life to come are expressed in two simple figures of nuns; while a monastery-bell, seen over the wall, denotes some great establishment ordained for prayer; and the painter's insistent multiplication of long horizontal lines is indicative of stability, tranquillity, and endurance,

strongly emphasising the idea evoked by the title. Such, too, is the picture of the "Disciple," awaiting the word of the Master in an attitude so absolutely *receptive* that when once seen it cannot possibly be imagined otherwise.

Suggestive, also, in their various degrees, are Strudwick's "Golden Thread," Alfred Stevens's "Judith," La Thangue's "The Man with a Scythe," G. Clausen's "The Girl at the Gate," and "Love locked out," by Anna Lea Merritt; but above all is there suggestiveness in the work of Frederick Walker, Herkomer, and Orchardson. Although they painted story-pictures and facts, these are in no way "genre pictures," scenes like those of Wilkie, Leslie, or Mulready. To begin with they are animated by deep feeling, and besides this the imagination of the spectator is always stimulated to conjure up other scenes as well as that before the eyes. Thus Walker's "Harbour of Refuge," which might also have been called "The Vale of Rest"—just as "The Vale of Rest" might have been called "The Harbour of Refuge"—leads the mind to think first upon the past of all these old people and invalids grouped around the statue, and then of the future which awaits them, and of Death, who is no more to be arrested than the robust reaper of the harvest-field. In the same way the sight of the aged men gathered together in the "Chapel at the Charterhouse," by Herkomer, arouses the thought of many different fates, and of storms weathered by these living wrecks before the ancient building opened its doors to them,

"*Comme un port en ruine à la barque en détresse.*"

Finally, every scene painted by Orchardson starts us upon a long dream. The flower of the past blooms again in memory for this old gentleman, seated in his armchair after dinner, when, listening to his daughter's singing, he suddenly recognises in some unexpected intonation "Her Mother's Voice." He lays down on his knee the open newspaper which can give him tidings but of to-day or yesterday; for it is the things of long ago, of his happy youth, that he looks to hear once more, and that seem brought back to him through an illusion—but transitory, alas!—by that fresh young voice at the piano. The modern taste which is shown throughout all Europe for the symbolic and the suggestive in Art comes indeed from the examples that we have here before our eyes.

Something else also is due to them, though less evidently so, and that is, Impressionism. Here I must explain myself. If by "impressionism" is meant a broad method of painting, laying in with the palette-knife, an absence of detail, the representation of the fugitive *appearance* of objects in light or in shadow, rather than their *construction*—in short, all that classic art is not—then Pre-Raphaelitism cannot be called the source of Impressionism. But the definition I have just given is a very bad one; for it comprises all contemporary landscape,

even that prior to the Impressionists, and it unites in one and the same category artists who have no points of resemblance: Claude Monet and Whistler, Renoir and Sargent, Sisley and Corot. When a definition says too much it says nothing. But if one means by "Impressionism" that painting in which, first, *the shadows themselves are brilliantly coloured*, and second, *brilliant colour is obtained by the juxtaposition of pure tones*, then we have a definition which denotes exactly the works of the impressionist masters: Claude Monet, Sisley, Pissarro, Renoir, Cézanne, Degas, Berthe Morizot, and Caillebotte, and does not permit of their being confounded with others. Now if you look at the works of Watts, of Rossetti, or of Hunt, you will see that at a time when everybody was making shadows brown they were already painting their shadows in bright colour, and that they very often juxtaposed or intermingled crude tones, in order to produce, at a distance, the harmony of the "optical synthesis." Millais often did this. And it was before their canvases, and before those of Turner, that Claude Monet and Pissarro, in 1870, thought out the new processes which they were to bring back to France under the name of Impressionism.

Before quitting the Tate Gallery, where we have seen even more markedly than at the National Gallery that originality and that independence of the Continent which we recognised on first entering the British Galleries, we must try to answer the question: Whence comes this originality? To whom or to what does British art owe its independence, its power, and—as we might say—its "insularity"?

Is it to the British public? To the taste of amateurs, of the Court, and of the well-to-do classes for a national art different from the art of the Continent? Not at all. The ordinary or official British public has always had very much the same kind of bad taste, as has that of the Continent. Save in what concerns "the nude," which has always been proscribed by the British public (at least as regards its contemporaries) and perhaps a more pronounced taste for landscape, we do not perceive among lovers of art across the Channel any tendency differing from those which formerly reigned in Paris, Vienna, and Berlin. Furthermore, it has nearly always been to Paris, Vienna, or Berlin that the Court and Society in general have sent for their favourite painters. Most of the official painters—from those of Henry VIII. or Charles I. to the painter preferred by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert—have been foreigners, and if London occasionally went mad over some mediocre artist he was never an Englishman! The French proverb: "He lies well who comes from afar," may here be applied with this variation: "He paints well who comes from abroad!"

Then, again, British amateurs of art have always been just like all other amateurs of art. They have invariably asked landscapists and genre-painters to give them well-finished pictures, full of detail, subdued in colour and brown, imitating old work. They asked portrait-painters to *pose* them as people were posed on the Continent. We know the

story of the stockbroker who descended upon Hoppner with his wife, his five sons, and his seven daughters, and at once burst forth : " Well, Mr. Painter, here we are, a baker's dozen ! How much will you charge for painting the whole lot of us : discount for cash down ? " And when the artist, taken by surprise, hesitatingly replied that it depended on a great many things : the style, the composition, the size of the picture, &c., the patron of art responded : " Oh ! that's all settled. We're all to be touched off in one piece, as large as life, seated upon our lawn at Clapham, and all singing ' God save the King ! ' "

We may supplement this anecdote by another, less well-known, that is told about one of Sir Edward Burne-Jones's models, a very sweet young woman of the lower class, who suddenly asked him one day while she was sitting : " Are you any relation to the Mr. Jones who lives in Great Russell Street ? *He* is a photographer too." Which may easily convince us that British painters do not owe their originality to the encouragement of the London *bourgeoisie* any more than to that of the Court.

Do they owe it to their theories upon Art ? Hardly. For these were persistently conservative. If we except the P.R.B.s alone, we find that the greatest innovators among British artists had the highest respect for the classical rules of the consecrated masters of old. Reynolds, for instance, maintained that in " The Death of Wolfe," as it was an heroic scene, the soldiers surrounding the general must be draped like the antique, and not dressed in modern garb as West had depicted them. In the same way Turner had so much respect for Canaletto that in his picture " Venice " he represented that master painting the town which he himself was to immortalise. " This choice of incident," said Ruskin, " is characteristic of Turner's respect for his predecessors in Art. He respected them and imitated them, but, finally, challenged them all in turn ; and having now come to Venice, he challenges Canaletto in his turn." It was, perhaps, this rooted respect for tradition which permitted the British painters to march with so sure a step into new regions of Art. They were never " revolutionists " but continually " evolutionists," and though never breaking with anything violently they never ceased renewing their methods. If we examine the careers of their brethren in France we find a perfectly different state of things. We see revolutions advertised with a flourish of trumpets, and at the end of a few years arrested by stagnation and reaction. In every revolutionist there slumbers an Academician ; and in every Academician there is a revolutionist who died early and whom the artist has survived. The French are revolutionists in theory rather than in practice : the British carry out their innovations before they announce them.

So it is not theories that have created the originality of British art. What is it then ?

It is this faculty possessed by the British painter for placing himself

alone face to face with Nature, without troubling himself about what others see in her; and also the confidence he has in his own personal impression. His respect for the old masters in no way commits him, in his view, to the necessity of imitating them. He salutes them and passes on. Without consulting with his comrades, he goes and studies human beings and animals, their expressions and gestures, skies, woods, and waters; or he questions himself and observes the form taken by his thoughts. Slowly and deliberately he contemplates all this, and seeks to reproduce it in plastic form. When he considers that he has attained his end he brings forward his testimony in public—his testimony as to his conclusions upon Nature and Mankind. That which has seemed good to him in his solitude, before his conscience and in the face of Nature, he now bravely proclaims amidst the crowd, without caring to know whether the crowd will agree with him.

And he is right in so doing. For, in the long run, conferences and associations always tend to *conserve* already existing ideas—the time-worn ideas of their members—and not to develop. Nothing has ever been created by putting five or six heads together. No discovery has ever been made by a committee. Discussions at a meeting have never succeeded in finding a natural law, a new colour or tone, or a fresh idea. A taste for solitude; good faith, kept both with Nature and oneself; indifference towards established opinion; confidence in the truth of one's own impressions, and constancy in the affirmation of one's own individuality: these are the qualities that have made British art such as we see it in the Tate Gallery; and they are not, perhaps, very different from those that have made the grandeur of the British nation.

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LESLIE, CHARLES R., R.A. 1794–1859.
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WYATT, HENRY. 1794–1840.
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POYNTER, AMBROSE. 1796–1886.
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LEE, FREDERICK RICHARD, R.A., AND T. S. COOPER.
A River Scene. TATE, 620.
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LEE, FREDERICK RICHARD, R.A., AND SIR EDWIN LANDSEER, R.A.
A Landscape with Figures. TATE, 1788.

UNKNOWN. ? Eighteenth Century.
View of St. Paul's from the Thames. N.G. 1681.

UNKNOWN. ? Eighteenth Century.
Landscape. N.G. 1097.

UNKNOWN. ? Late Eighteenth Century.
View of Hyde Park Corner (looking Eastward) N.G. 1254.

BOXALL, SIR WILLIAM, R.A. 1800–1879.
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CATTERMOLE, GEORGE. 1800–1868.
A Castle Entrance. TATE, 1721.
Charcoal Study for a Landscape. TATE, 1730.
A Scene of Monastic Life. TATE, 1731.
A Scene of Monastic Life. TATE, 1732.
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HOLLAND, JAMES. 1800–1870.
View of Hyde Park Corner, looking East. TATE, 1253.
The Grand Canal, Venice. TATE, 1809.

LANE, THEODORE. 1800–1828.
The Gouty Angler. TATE, 440.

PYNE, JAMES BAKER. 1800–1870.
Totland Bay. TATE, 1545.

WEBSTER, THOMAS, R.A. 1800–1886.
Going into School, called also The Truant. TATE, 426.
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Portraits of the Artist's Father and Mother. TATE, 1225.

BONINGTON, RICHARD PARKES. 1801–1828.
The Column of St. Mark, Venice. TATE, 374.
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WOODWARD, THOMAS. 1801–1852.
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LANCE, GEORGE. 1802–1864.
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"A Distinguished Member of the Royal Humane Society." TATE, 1226.

Study of a Lion. N.G. 1349.

Study of a Lion. N.G. 1350.

A Scene at Abbotsford. TATE, 1532.

Uncle Tom and His Wife for Sale. TATE, 1533.

A Donkey and Foal. TATE, 1787.

Portrait of John Landseer. TATE (not numbered).

LANDSEER, SIR EDWIN HENRY, R.A., AND SIR JOHN EVERETT MILLAIS, P.R.A.

Equestrian Portrait. TATE, 1503.

ALLEN, JOSEPH W. 1803–1852.

A Landscape. TATE, 1904.

COOPER, THOMAS SIDNEY, R.A. 1803–1902.

Milking Time. N.G. 435.

Cattle. Morning. N.G. 436.

Landscape and Cattle. TATE, 1800.

KNIGHT, JOHN PRESCOTT, R.A. 1803–1881.

Sacking a Church in the Time of John Knox. TATE, 1498.

REDGRAVE, RICHARD, R.A. 1804–1888.

Country Cousins. N.G. 428.

LEWIS, JOHN FREDERICK, R.A. 1805–1876.

Edfou: Upper Egypt. TATE, 1405.

The Courtyard of the Coptic Patriarch's House in Cairo. TATE, 1688.

Sketch in Spain. TATE, 1729.

DYCE, WILLIAM, R.A. 1806–1864.

Pegwell Bay, 1858. TATE, 1407.

St. John leading the Blessed Virgin Mary from the Tomb. TATE, 1426.

HAGHE, LOUIS. 1806–1885.

Council of War at Courtray. N.G. 456.

HART, SOLOMON A., R.A. 1806–1881.

Interior of a Jewish Synagogue at the Time of the Reading of the Law. TATE, 424.

MACLISE, DANIEL, R.A. 1806–1870.

The Play Scene in "Hamlet." TATE, 422.

Malvolio and the Countess. TATE, 423.

POOLE, PAUL FALCONER, R.A. 1807–1879.

"The Vision of Ezekiel." TATE, 1091.

SLEAP, JOSEPH AXE. 1808–1859.

Paul's Wharf. N.G. 676.

RICHMOND, GEORGE, R.A. 1809–1896.

Christ and the Woman of Samaria. TATE, 1492.

HERBERT, JOHN ROGERS. 1810–1890.
Sir Thomas More and His Daughter. N.G. 425.

BENNETT, WILLIAM. 1811–1871.
In Richmond Park. TATE, 1722.

COOKE, EDWARD W., R.A. 1811–1880.
Dutch Boats in a Calm. TATE, 447.
The Boat House. TATE, 448.
Canal of the Giudecca, Venice. TATE, 1780.
A Mill near Oxford. TATE, 1802.

CRESWICK, THOMAS, R.A. 1811–1869.
The Pathway to the Village Church. TATE, 429.
Landscape and River. TATE, 1785.

SCOTT, WILLIAM BELL. 1811–1890.
The Eve of the Deluge. TATE, 1322.

WILLCOCK, GEORGE BARRELL. 1811–1852.
Chilston Lane, Torquay. TATE, 1389.

MÜLLER, WILLIAM J. 1812–1845.
Eastern Landscape. TATE, 379.
Landscape: A River Scene. TATE, 1040.
A Street in Cairo. TATE, 1463.
Dredging on the Medway. TATE, 1474.
Carnarvon Castle. TATE, 1565.
A Lake-side Scene. TATE, 1728.

JOHNSTON, ALEXANDER. 1815–1891.
Lord William Russell in the Tower. N.G. 449.

EGG, AUGUSTUS L., R.A. 1816–1863.
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ILLUSTRATIONS

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PRAWN CATCHERS
BY WILLIAM COLLINS, R.A.

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YOUTH ON THE PROW AND PLEASURE
AT THE HELM
BY WILLIAM ETTY, R.A.

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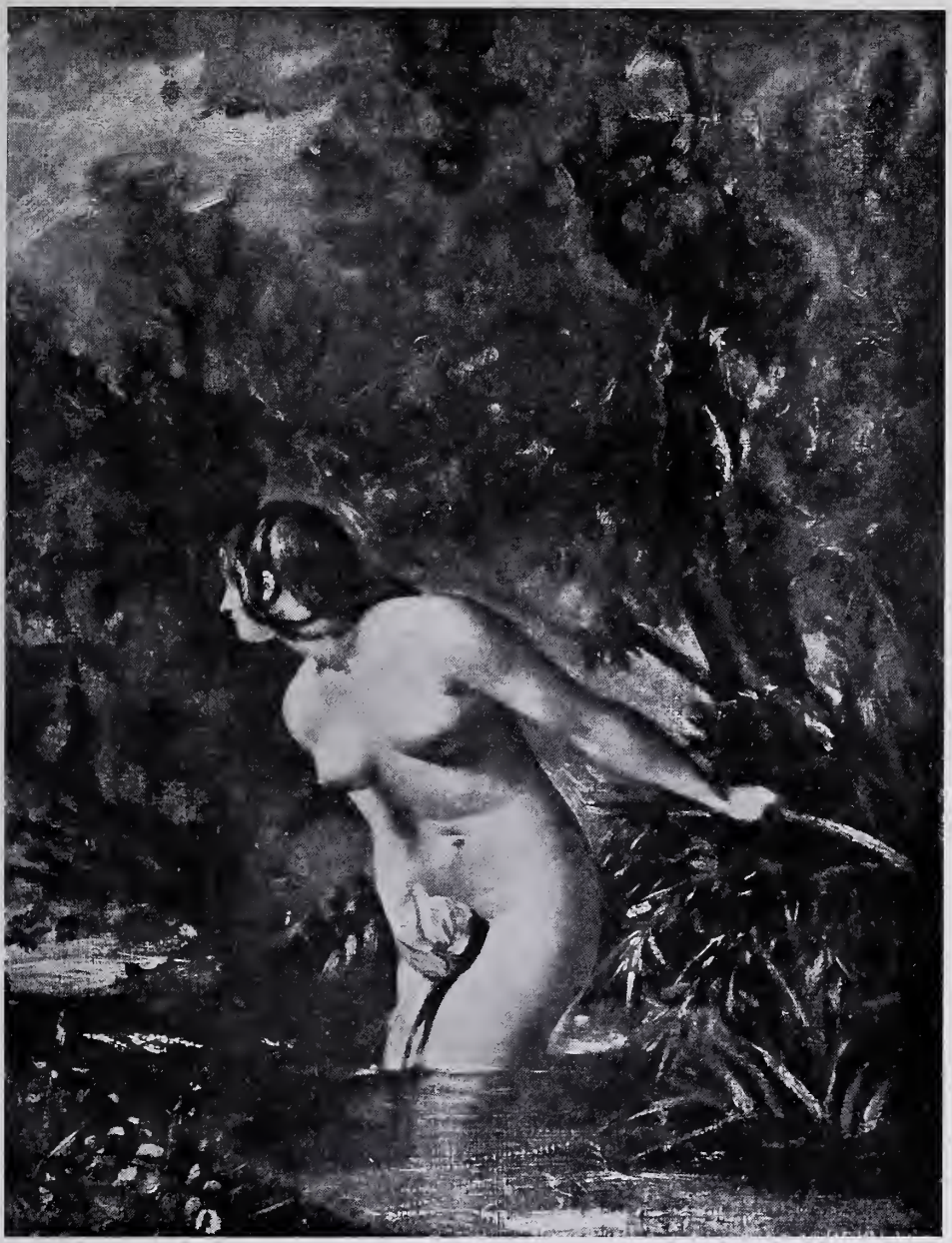
THE LUTE PLAYERS
BY WILLIAM ETTY, R.A.



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THE BATHER "AT THE DOUBTFUL BREEZE ALARMED"
BY WILLIAM ETTY, R.A.

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VIEW IN SUSSEX
BY ANTHONY VANDYKE COPLEY FIELDING

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WOOD CUTTERS
BY JOHN LINNELL

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NOONDAY REST
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CONTEMPLATION
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LAKE COMO
BY CLARKSON STANFIELD, R.A.

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GUIEDECCA AND JESUITS' CHURCH, VENICE
BY CLARKSON STANFIELD, R.A.

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SANCHO PANZA IN THE
APARTMENT OF THE DUCHESS
BY CHARLES R. LESLIE, R.A.

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UNCLE TOBY AND THE WIDOW WADMAN
BY CHARLES R. LESLIE, R.A.

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THE FRUGAL MEAL
BY JOHN FREDERICK HERRING

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INTERIOR OF CATHEDRAL, BURGOS
BY DAVID ROBERTS, R.A.

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A DAME'S SCHOOL
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THE COLUMN OF ST. MARK, VENICE
BY RICHARD PARKES BONINGTON

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WAR
BY SIR EDWIN LANDSEER, R.A.

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STUDY OF A LION
BY SIR EDWIN LANDSEER, R.A.

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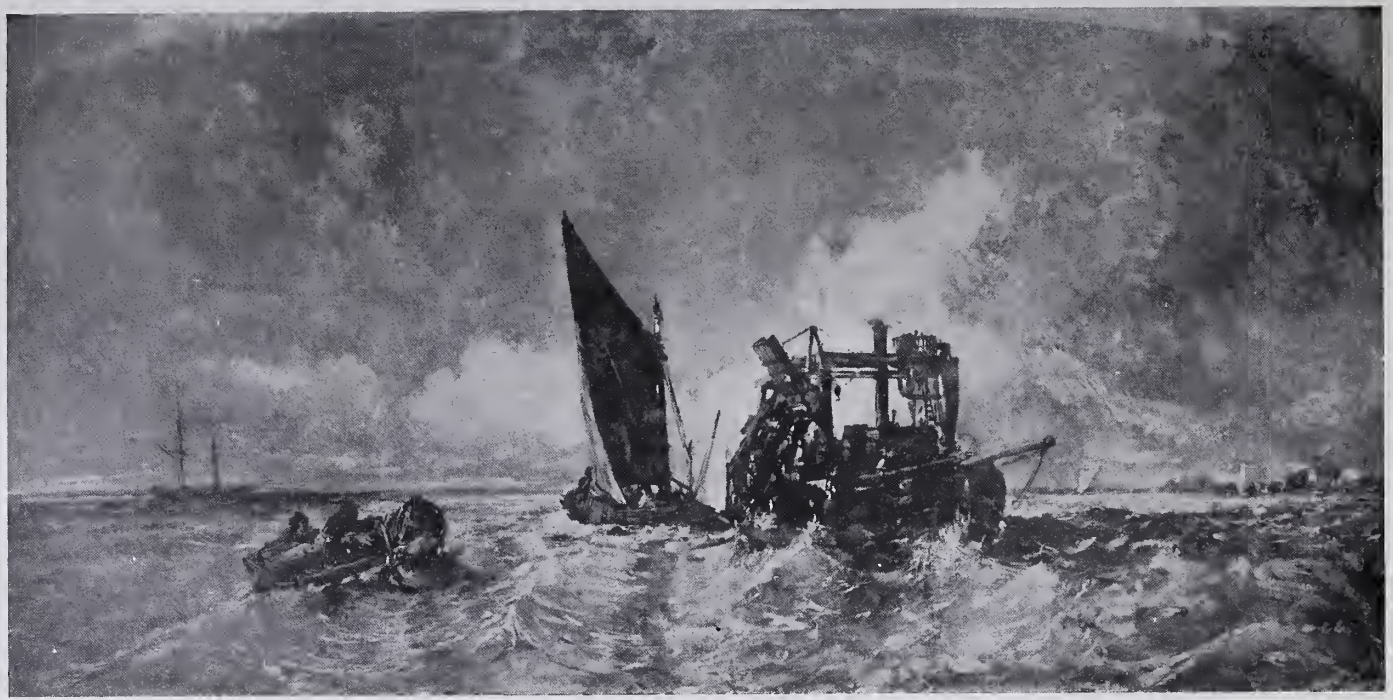
THE PLAY SCENE IN HAMLET
BY DANIEL MACLISE, R.A.



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DREDGING ON THE MEDWAY
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CARNARVON CASTLE
BY WILLIAM J. MÜLLER

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THE SOUTH SEA BUBBLE—A SCENE IN CHANGE ALLEY IN 1720
BY EDWARD MATTHEW WARD, R.A.

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JAMES II. IN HIS PALACE OF WHITEHALL, RECEIVING THE NEWS OF THE LANDING OF THE PRINCE OF ORANGE IN 1688
BY EDWARD MATTHEW WARD, R.A.

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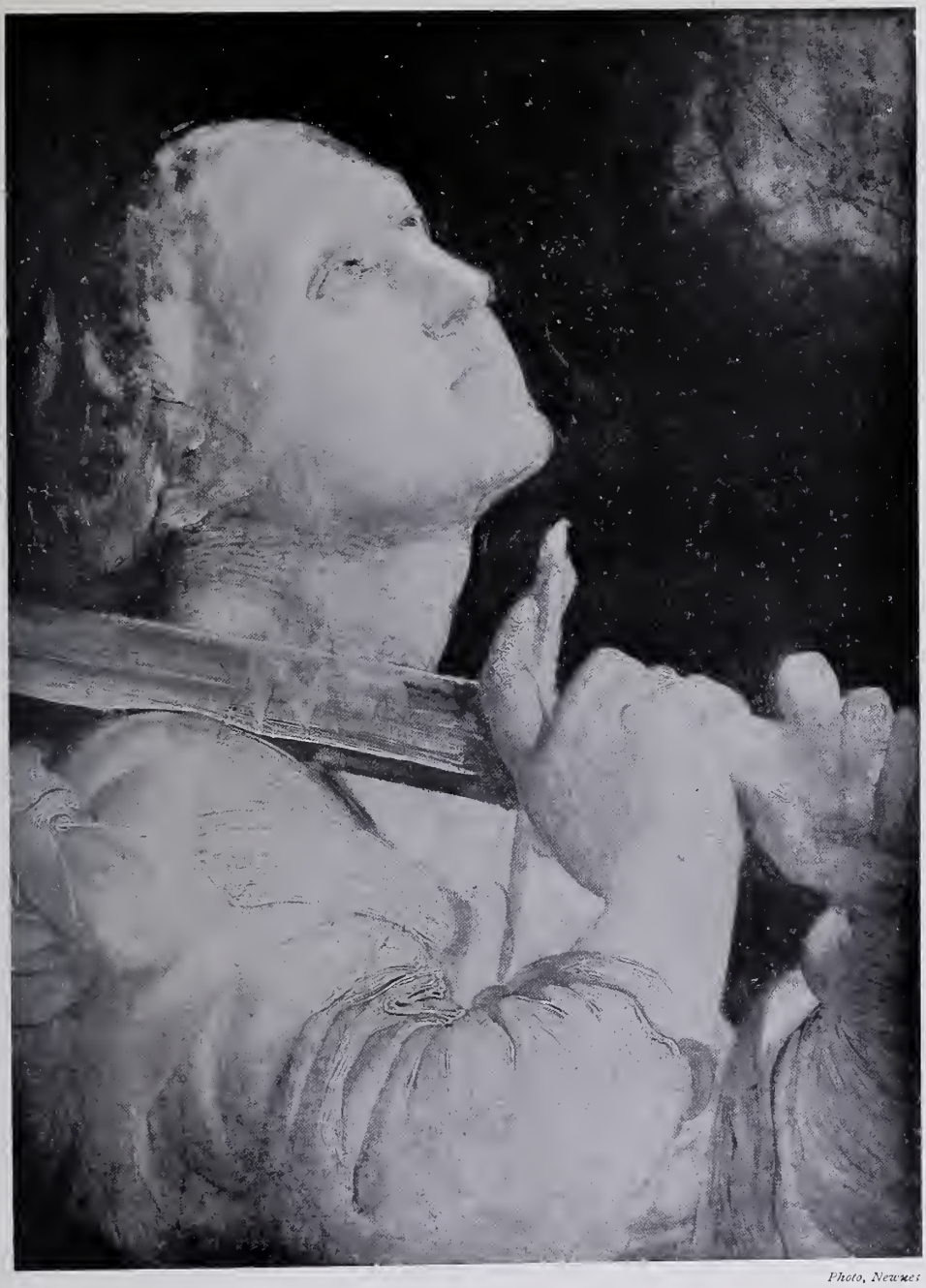
CARDINAL WOLSEY AND THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM
BY SIR JOHN GILBERT, R.A.



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JUDITH
BY ALFRED STEVENS

Photo, Hollyer

PSYCHE
BY GEORGE FREDERICK
WATTS, R.A.

Photo, Hollyer

HOPE
BY GEORGE FREDERICK WATTS, R.A.

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LOVE AND LIFE
BY GEORGE FREDERICK WATTS, R.A.

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LOVE AND DEATH
BY GEORGE FREDERICK WATTS, R.A.

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LOVE TRIUMPHANT
BY GEORGE FREDERICK WATTS, R.A.

THE CAST SHOE
BY GEORGE HEMING MASON, A.R.A.

Photo, Valentine

WIND ON THE WOLD
BY GEORGE HEMING MASON, A.R.A.

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CHRIST WASHING ST. PETER'S FEET
BY FORD MADOX BROWN

JERUSALEM AND THE VALLEY OF JEHOSAPHAT
BY THOMAS SEDDON

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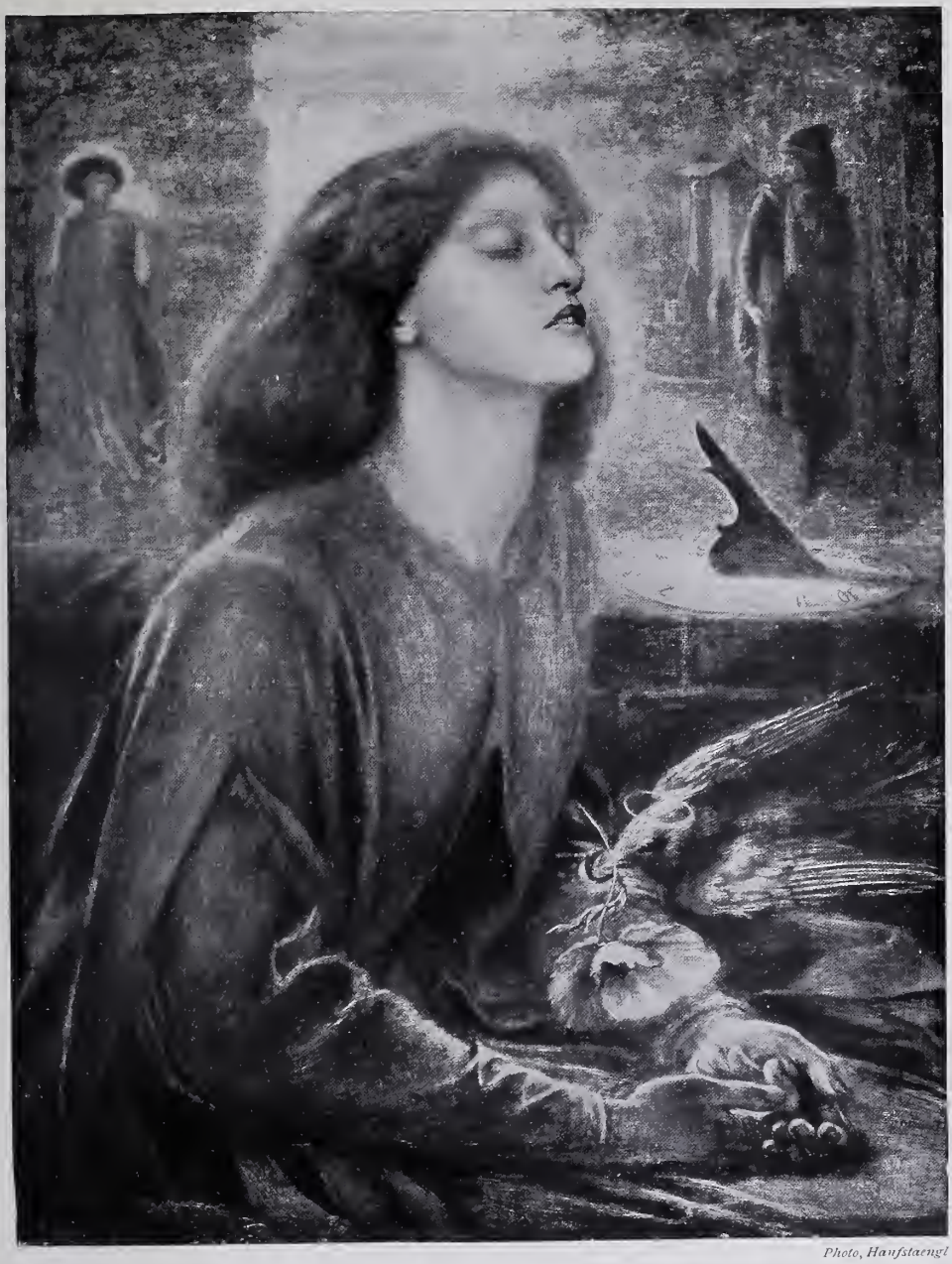
MOUNT ST. MICHAEL
BY JAMES WEBB

Photo, Hanfstaengl

"ECCE ANCILLA DOMINI"
BY GABRIEL CHARLES DANTE ROSSETTI



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BEATA BEATRIX
BY GABRIEL CHARLES DANTE ROSSETTI

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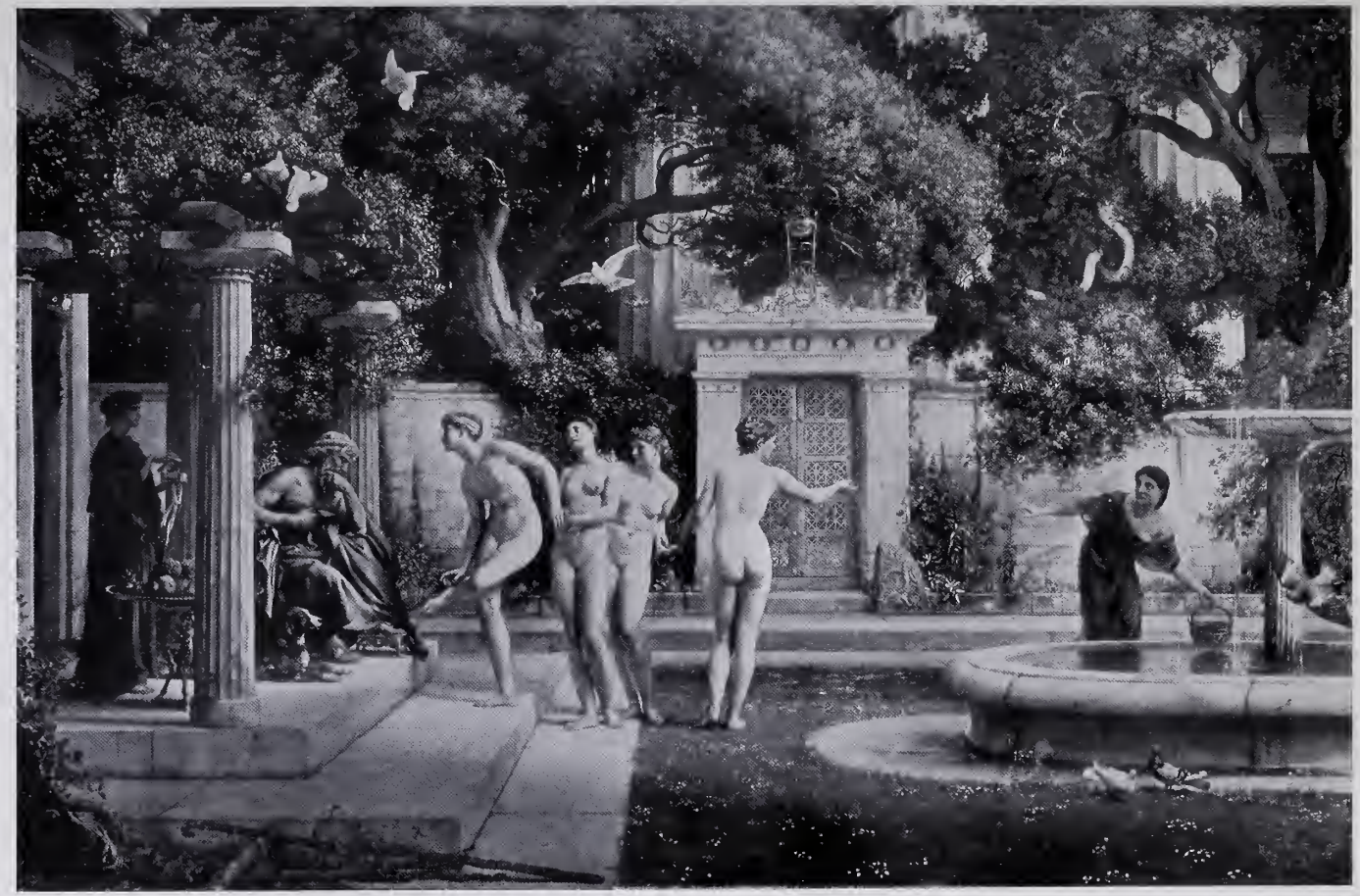

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